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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/541,076

06/29/2005

Dennis Ciplickas

524322000200

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20872 7590 01/16/2008  
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP  
425 MARKET STREET  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2482

EXAMINER

SIEK, VUTHE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2825

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

01/16/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/541,076

Applicant(s)

CIPICKAS ET AL.

Examiner

Vuthe Siek

Art Unit

2825

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 34, 37 and 67 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-33, 35, 36 and 38-66 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 29 June 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/25/06
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This office action is in response to application 10/541,076 filed on 06/29/2005.

Claims 1-67 remain pending in the application.

#### ***Specification***

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1, 34, 37 and 67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Stine et al. (6,901,564 B2).
5. As to claims 1, 37 and 67, Stine et al. substantially the same the claim limitations of designing an IC to improve yield comprising obtaining a design element (Fig. 19); creating a variant design element by modifying a feature (Fig. 18; layout attributes; col. 4 lines 18-31; col. 5; col. 7); determining a yield to area ratio and if the yield to area ratio

is greater than a yield to area ratio of the obtained design element retaining the variant design element to be used in designing the IC (col. 13-14).

6. As to claim 34, Stine et al. the yield improvement of the layout modification as taught by Stine would impliedly include determine post-layout modifications to improve yield and reliability and manufacturing process.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1, 34, 37 and 67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Allan, "Yield/Reliability Enhancement using Automated Minor Layout Modifications," IEEE, 2000, pages 252-261 in view of Satya et al., (6,751,519 B1).

9. As to claims 1, 37 and 67, Allan teaches obtaining a design element of an integrated circuit design and creating a design layout modification for a selected design element (a variant design element) by modifying a feature of the design element to improve yield/reliability (see whole document). Allan does not teach determining a yield to area ratio and if the determined yield to area ratio is greater than a yield to area ratio of the obtained design element, retaining the variant design element to be used in designing the integrated circuit. Satya et al. appears to teach yield information that includes systematic yield component  $Y_o$  which is independent of area (col. 6, lines 38-67; col. 7 lines 1-60). This suggests that any improvement of  $Y_o$  (when a yield to area

ratio due to the change is greater than a yield to area ration of the obtained design element) is would keep any changes to the design elements (variant design element) to be used in designing the integrated circuit. With that suggestion, it would have been obvious to practitioners in the art at the time the invention was made to determine a yield to area ratio and if the determined yield to area ratio is greater than a yield to area ratio of the obtained design element, retaining the variant design element to be used in designing the integrated circuit because this would improve yield and reliability of the circuit design.

10. As to claim 34, Allan and Satya et al. do not teach post-layout tape-out modifications. However, post-layout tape-out modifications is known in the art is well known in the art. Utilizing this well known art limitation would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because any minor modification to layout would improve manufacturing of the semiconductor product.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

11. Claims 2-9; 10-12; 13-33; 26; 35-36; 38-64 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vuthe Siek whose telephone number is (571) 272-1906.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Chiang can be reached on (571) 272-7483. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Vuthe Siek/  
Vuthe Siek  
Primary Examiner, A.U. 2825